

Director's Message



Riding the dragon

There's an ancient Chinese proverb that goes like this: Three men were traveling along a narrow mountain trail when they came upon a ferocious dragon. The first man tried to fight the dragon, but the dragon was too strong and it defeated and ate the man. The second man tried to run away from the dragon, but the dragon was too fast and it overcame the man and ate him. The third man, seeing what had happened to the first two, took the only other option. He jumped upon the dragon's back and held on for dear life.

At first, riding the dragon was very difficult and sometimes even terrifying. It also seemed dangerous, for the dragon was totally unpredictable and appeared to be out of control. However the man held on and survived. As time went by he was able to sense when the dragon was going to change directions and it became easier to stay on its back. Although the man could never control the dragon and had to be continuously watchful, he was able to become more comfortable riding the dragon and was actually able to share in the fruits of the dragon's many victories; for no one could stop the dragon. In the end, the man prospered because he had learned how to ride the dragon.

You've probably figured out that the dragon that these men faced was the "Dragon of Change." It's also obvious that the Dragon of Change is a prominent figure at NASA and JSC. Even before the awful tragedy that occurred February 1, we had been in a state of flux for the past year: a new Administrator, a new center director, a new International Space

Station Program Manager, a new Vision and Mission, One NASA, Educator Astronauts, IFMP, Freedom to Manage, etc.

This propensity toward change has become even more pronounced since the *Columbia* accident: the intense support of the CAIB investigation by many of you, a major turnover in Space Shuttle Program senior management, Return to Flight activities, Space Shuttle Service Life Extension Program activities, Orbital Space Plane support, new Center Directors throughout the Space Flight Enterprise, full cost accounting, etc. You name it; it's changing! Just imagine what change might take place after the official CAIB report is published!

So, what are we going to do about all this? We can dig our heels in and resist or we might high-tail it and find something else to do. Neither one of those options worked for the men on the trail. Here's what I think we should do. We should embrace these changes and use them to our advantage in improving our work, our processes and ourselves. This won't be easy. Doing things differently is a naturally uncomfortable enterprise. However, the payoff can be extraordinary if we have the courage to accept new leadership, new ideas and new methods.

Let's be positive, aggressive and flexible in responding to the changes taking place. Remember, as long as we retain our core values of total integrity, professional excellence, respect and commitment, our course will stay true and we will triumph. Let's ride the Dragon and reap its rewards!

Beak sends...

Recent NASA personnel changes

There have been a number of recent management changes at NASA centers around the country. Here is a breakdown of the new assignments as of press time.

1 Johnson Space Center – Space Shuttle Program

Bill Parsons, Manager, Space Shuttle Program
Previous position: Center Director, Stennis Space Center

N. Wayne Hale, Jr., Acting Deputy Manager, Space Shuttle Program
Previous position: Manager of Launch Integration at Kennedy Space Center

Steve M. Poulos, Jr., Acting Manager, Orbiter Project Office
Previous position: Chief, Crew and Thermal Systems Division, Engineering Directorate

Edward J. Mango, Deputy Manager, Orbiter Project Office
Previous position: Technical Assistant to the Space Shuttle Program Manager on detail from KSC

John P. Shannon, Acting Manager, Flight Operations and Integration
Previous position: Lead Flight Director on STS-102 in March 2001, then Deputy Director of the Columbia Task Force that served as the interface between NASA and the Columbia Accident Investigation Board

John F. Muratore, Manager, Systems Integration Office
Previous position: Assistant to the Director of Engineering at JSC

2 Ames Research Center

G. Allen Flynt, Deputy Center Director
Previous position: Manager of JSC's EVA Project Office

3 Kennedy Space Center

James W. Kennedy, Center Director
Previous position: KSC's Deputy Director

Woodrow Whitlow, Jr., Deputy Director
Previous position: Director of Research and Technology at Glenn Research Center

James Hattaway, Jr., Associate Director
Previous position: Director of KSC's Procurement Office

Michael Wetmore, Launch Integration Manager, Space Shuttle Program
Previous position: Acting Director of Shuttle Processing at KSC

4 Langley Research Center

Gen. Roy D. Bridges, Center Director
Previous position: Center Director for KSC

Ralph Roe, Jr., Special Assitant to the Center Director
Previous position: Manager of JSC's Space Shuttle Vehicle Engineering Office

5 Marshall Space Flight Center

David A. King, Center Director
Previous position: MSFC's Deputy Director

Rex D. Geveden, Deputy Center Director
Previous position: Deputy Director of MSFC's Science Directorate

